The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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RECESSIONAL.

God of our fathers, known of old,—
Lord of our far flung battle line,—
Beneath whose awful hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine,—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget,— lest we forget!

The tumult and the shouting dies,
The captains and the kings depart:
Still stands thine ancient sacrifice,—
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget,— lest we forget!

Far-called, our navies melt away;
On dune and headland sinks the fire.
Lo! all our pomp of yesterday
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
Judge of the nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget,— lest we forget!

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
Wild tongues that have not thee in awe,
Such boasting as the Gentiles use
Or lesser breeds without the law,—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget,— lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts her trust
In reeking tube and iron shard,
All valiant dust that builds on dust,
And guarding calls not thee to guard,
For frantic boast and foolish word,
Thy mercy on thy people, Lord!
Amen.

— *Rudyard Kipling.*

MY BURDEN AND MY BROTHER'S.

Let every man bear his own burden.— GAL. vi. 5.
Bear ye one another's burdens.—GAL. vi. 2.

As Paul wrote, he used two words where our Testament uses one. Each man is to carry his own burden, so as to be ready to lift any heavy load which presses his brother down. The word in the first case means "something which can be carried," as a man may carry his carpet-bag in travel. The word in the other case is the heavy load — perhaps of affliction — which we call "a dead-weight." It is something which has to be lifted, but it is a word which we should not use when we speak of a burden to be moved.

Paul is the man who of all the apostles and followers of Jesus Christ has had the most to do with making this world what it is. And he is the first writer, Jew or Gentile, who had to open out into details what one may call the new moral law. This is the special law of Christians,— that is, of those who have found out that they are not merely creatures of God, but his children; not his subjects, far less his slaves, but fellow-workmen with him, children who share his purpose and enter into his plans. The gospel is glad tidings, because it makes to man this revelation wholly new of what he is. Now such a revelation means a wholly new code of duty. It is an extension of the word "duty." And it is very fortunate that a clear-headed leader of men, like Paul, was the first to write out this code, even in some detail.

It is easy for any one to say that every man must bear his own burdens. But that is hardly a religious statement. It is little more than a hard statement of bald fact. We should be understood if we called it the Robinson Crusoe statement. It is limited and cold and hard, and seems to lead to nothing. Robinson Crusoe is fluug on his island, he is all alone; and he hears a voice say to him, "Every man must bear his own burden." But he has lived in a world which knows more; and he cries out, "Alas! alas! the burden is too heavy for me!" To that ejaculation the Infinite Spirit replies, "You must." That is to say, there will be times when the God of the universe has to place his child on a lonely post. There shall be no one at the right hand, and no one at the left. There shall be no one to consult, no one who will encourage. He may be hanging alone upon a cross, "despised and rejected of men." And this is what the Holy Spirit says to each of us. Unless Peter or Bartholomew can bear his own burden, this Spirit of the universe has no use for him. But when Peter or Bartholomew answers bravely and promptly, as Isaiah did at the altar, "Send me!" then he is recognized as partner in the universe. Then are told to him the secrets of the God of the universe. No desert island any longer. He lives in that empire of justice which rules in Arcturus and in the Pleiades. He sings songs which encourage the world of all centuries. He plants wheat, of which the harvests feed the antipodes. At an open grave he reads words of comfort which Moses, the man of God, wrote down for him on the slope of Sinai. For him all selfish life is over, and the reign of the larger morals has begun. Because he was willing to stand alone, he was permitted to stand together, bear his brother's burdens. He has pushed back the wicket, and is free in the paradise of a common life. Here is the Christian doctrine of morals. If children of God, then heirs,— heirs of God.

A man must bear his own burden, because man has been so made that he can be alone. He can go and come without a companion. He is not like a leaf of a tree, which dies at once if you cut it off, because it is physically tied to a hundred thousand other leaves. And so there comes to him this hard command, cruel, if you please, which says, "You must!" even though he be alone at midnight, though he be Pellico in a prison-cell, though he be nailed to a lonely cross where all men forsake him. But let him show then and there that he is God's child,— not a poor bubble of tost spray,— that, as God wills, he can will. Let him show that he can endure, if he ought to endure; and then the glad tidings of the gospel are: "All things are yours,— things present, things past, things to come." Heir of God, indeed! Nothing shall separate you from the love of God. Neither height nor depth nor anything that has been made; for you are his, and he is yours.

So is it, then, that a man of experience, like Paul, makes sure of the personal force of those whom he teaches, of their self-control. Think of the immense range of his new glad tidings! Why, he is enlarging life and the world to them. This Galatian man, who is to-day grafting an olive-tree on one of his sunny hillsides, shall interest himself in far-away Spain or in some pale orphan child on the slope of Zion. As in our day, where this gospel comes, some poor blacksmith's drudge — washing the soot from his hands — shall interest himself in the hunger of Cuba, in the freedom of Crete, in new hearing for the deaf, in new eyes for the blind, in sending ice to India, or in cleaning the streets of Santiago. Such men enter into the joy of abundant living. They shall be able to bear their brother's burdens, though this brother were the seaman in the storm, were the criminal in the prison. Such a man shall bear the burdens of the mother who has lost her child. He shall feed the hunger of the caravan on the desert. He shall have his share in the cheer of the peasant's festival. He shall send his congratulation to the soldier returning from war. He shall abate every form of human sorrow. He shall quicken every throb of human joy. All this is granted to those who accept the universe; that is to say, who go about God's work. Such joy comes to him who, God-like, accepts the first condition; though he be a lonely sentinel at midnight, fills every duty of that separate post; because he is master of his little self, he is made partner in the infinite interests of mankind.

"Thou hast been faithful in a few things.

I will make thee ruler over many things." Here is the cheerful promise of the Lord of Life.

Yes, a man eats and drinks that he may be strong. His own burden, he bears it. He clothes himself, that he may be warm. He learns his letters, that he may read. He bears his own burden. He carries his carpet-bag. He must. But all along he does this that he may bear his brother's burden. The tool shall be sharp and strong. The aim shall be true. The step shall be steady. Am I to carry the child across the torrent? Then my arm shall be strong enough, and my foot sure enough.

Let every man bear his own burden, that he may work with God, and bear the burdens of his brother.

"I look forward to an age when each man shall rush eagerly to help any one in trouble, as I would grasp at the mantel here if I felt the ground shaking." That is George Eliot's word of prophecy. New Year's Day opens such vistas. It tempts us into highways where the nations war, into byways where the beggar counts his crusts. I have been learning to read. Where is the blind man I can read to? I have been learning to sew. God may send me, if he chooses, to clothe the naked. Did you say there was some one alone in an attic? Here am I: send me. Did you say that the widow Dorcas had no one to plant her garden? You shall not say it again.

Yes; and the immortals live together, they bear each other's burdens, they rejoice in each other's joys. I am one of them, and in this year I will try their great experiment. The world is knit together more closely than ever. I will do my part to knit it closer. The East needs the West, and the North the South as never before. So here am I: send me to answer that necessity. Those yonder are God's children. We here are God's children. Then they are our sisters and brothers. We are their brothers and sisters. We will bear their burdens as we can. We will pray the Father that they shall learn to bear ours.

In 1799 my father's father fattened his own pork and beef and poultry. He harvested his own corn. In 1899 I buy my beef in Texas, my pork in Chicago. He ate no oatmeal, because his was hardly good enough for his horses. I buy mine in Canada. He ate no wheat bread because the transport of wheat flour was beyond his means. My harvest off in Dakota sends me mine. These are little things in comparison; but the age, which has seen such little changes, teaches in them its secret to another century. It knows that insurance must be mutual insurance. It knows that trade must seek the other man's profit as well as mine. It knows that justice is gained not by the strength of a baron's tenantry, nor safety by the strength of a baron's castle. It is gained as all take care of each, of castle and cottage together. Health is the health of the community, not only so of this man or woman. Wealth comes from the prosperity of the community: it is not the stumbling on a gold streak or the raking for a Kohinoor. The century has learned by some hard lessons that each man must bear his brother's burden.

To the next century we must teach that lesson, and place it on higher ground. The Son of God has shown us that all of us are God's children. If children, heirs,—heirs of God. Such right have we to claim that his kingdom shall come, that all laws shall be his law, that the strong shall help the weak, and the weak the strong. The children are brothers and sisters. Because they are, they shall bear the others' burdens.—*Edward Everett Hale.*

THE STILL HOUR.

O Strength, strip me of self and set me free!
Touch thou my bonds, and bid them fall away.
Hold thou the lips which would complain to thee,
And teach, instead, my spirit how to pray.

O Love, give me a heart so like thine own
That it may beat in unison with thine;
Make it a temple for thyself alone,
Too long it has been filled with thoughts of mine.

O Wisdom, teach me, I am all unlearned.
I do not know thee when I meet thy face
In discipline,— my dim eyes being turned
Upon myself, see not thy glance of grace.

O Sight, see for me. Be it night or day,
Life is a maze through which I cannot see.
My feet grow more uncertain of the way,—
O never-failing Sight, see thou for me!

O God, Wisdom thou art, Strength, Love, and Sight;
Grant me a little portion of each grace;
I yield to thee, do thou what seemeth right;
When thou art done, let me behold thy face!
—*Anna J. Granniss.*

Dear Father, thine are these beautiful summer days, and thine these nights of quiet rest and peace. Of thee the breezes speak, as they quicken the weary bodies of men into fresh life and inspire discouraged hearts with fresh courage. May this sense of the glory and wonder of thy universe remain with us, a precious possession to brighten the days of sterner toil that must return; and may we feel thy presence not less in the cares of our daily lives than in the solitude of nature. Be with us always, and let us live to the true fulfilment of thy will, as do the flowers and trees and birds. Amen.

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[*Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.*]

OFFERS.

Will any mother who would like to have "Gentle Measures in Training the Young," by Jacob Abbott, or any one who would like "Black Beauty," address Miss Langmaid, 373 Boylston Street, Boston, Mass.?

The Sunday-school, Church of the Disciples Branch of the Cheerful Letter, offer the following books: "Knight Errant," Lyall; "L'Abbé Constantin," Halévy; "Jane Eyre," Bronté; "Black Rock," Ralph Connor; "Romola," Eliot; "Lorna Doone," Blackmore; "Beside the Bonnie Briar Bush," Ian MacLaren. Address Miss Lena L. Carpenter, Church of Disciples Warren Avenue, Boston, Mass.

REQUESTS.

[*Read directions at beginning of Book Club before writing.*]

Those who send offers and requests for the Book Club will do us a kindness by noting the following suggestions: 1. Please write very clearly. 2. Do not use a pencil. 3. Do not use contractions, especially names of States (as Cal. and Col. for California, Colorado). 4. Write on one side only of the paper. 5. Do not forget to give your full address. (The State is now and then omitted.) 6. Do not send matter for the Book Club to Miss Clarke, but to Mrs. Nichols, the Book Club secretary.

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

I am a young girl, and have not been enjoying good health all my life. Oh, I did enjoy reading *The Cheerful Letter* sent me, and I feel that, if I could obtain reading matter, it would help to pass off my lonely hours. I would be glad if some one would send me books and magazines, as they certainly would be appreciated, and also if some one would be so kind as to please send me *The Cheerful Letter*. Miss Elma Horton, Elkville, North Carolina.

Mrs. M. V. Gregory, Afton, Arkansas, living in the district that was so much injured by the drought last year, and unable to buy reading, asks that any good literature be sent her.

Mrs. Lucy S. Hill, Adial, Nelson County, Virginia, asks for "Elements of Geography," "First Copy Book," "Fourth and Fifth Reader," and *Youth's Companion*.

Mrs. John Ellis, Verano, Virginia, an invalid for fifteen years, asks for any good reading.

Mrs. L. D. Creecy, Blaine, Oregon, asks for magazines or any reading for herself and sixteen-year-old daughter.

I am a lonely widow. My children are all married, and I am living alone. I would be very glad to have a correspondent who would send some religious reading. I would prefer something that would help me with my Sunday-school class. I teach the little card class. I have twenty-six scholars from four to ten years old. We started up a Sunday-school last year in an old house that was too sorry for any one to live in. But we had to give it up through the winter on account of the house being so open, and we could not have a fire. But the neighbors all went to work, and have built a new school-house; and we organized again this spring. Have a good school now. Hoping to hear from you soon, Mrs. Mary J. Waddell, Wadeboro, North Carolina.

In April our house was destroyed by fire with most of its contents; and we are now living in a log cabin, with a large family of children, one a deaf-mute. My children range from four years up. I would like for a book or two of nice reading matter. I am real anxious for "Uncle Tom's Cabin." The children want to read it, and I am not able to buy it for them. Have you the song book by the name of "Songs of Glory"? Please send me that, if I am not asking for too much. With best and kindest wishes, Mrs. J. A. Howard, Manchester, North Carolina.

Mrs. Harry Williams, Pedlar Mills, Virginia, an invalid, would be glad of any reading.

Miss Maggie Hartley, Blackstone, North Carolina, asks for "Stepping Heavenward," "Dombey and Son," or any of Dickens's works, and *Ladies' Home Journal.*

W. A. Gattis Foster, Summerfield, North Carolina, would be glad to receive the following phonographic works by Ben Pitman and Jerome B. Harnard: "The Manual of Phonography," "The Phonographic Readers," "Reporter's Companion," "Phrase Book," and the "Phonographic Dictionary."

Dear *Cheerful Letter* friends, I wish to thank those of whom I have received reading in the past, and come again asking for more, if it is not too much. I receive the *Ladies' Home Journal* and *Child Garden* every month, which I am fond of reading. I would like to receive an illustrated family Bible, "Household Angel in Disguise," and any kind of magazines, old or late numbers, any kind of good books for children, or any kind of good religious books. All reading is passed on to others, like myself, not able to buy. So I hope this is not too much to ask for. Mrs. Ada V. Wann, Forreston, Ellis County, Texas.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

[*Contributions to this department may be sent to Mrs. J. S. Howe, 26 Chestnut Street, Brookline, Mass.*]

MATERNAL AUTHORITY (*continued*).

Look at the parent surrounded by a family of children who are in the habit of doing as they please. She is very busy, I will suppose, upon some article of dress which it is important should be immediately finished. Every moment she is compelled to raise her eyes from her work to see what the children are about. Samuel is climbing upon the table. Jane is drawing out the andirons. Charles is galloping about the room upon the tongs. The mother, almost deafened with noise, wonders what makes her children so much more troublesome than other people's.

"Jane, let those andirons alone," she exclaims. Jane runs away for a moment, chases Charles around the room, and returns to her mischief.

"Charles, put up those tongs." Charles pays no heed to the direction.

The mother, soon seeing how he is wearing the carpet and bruising the furniture, gets up, gives Charles a shake, and places the tongs in their proper situation. But, by the time she is fairly seated and at her work again, Charles is astride the shovel and travelling at the top of his speed.

I need not continue this picture. But every one knows that it is not exaggerated. Such scenes do often occur. Now this mother will tell you that she *has not time* to bring her children into subjection. Whereas, had she been faithful with each individual child, she would have saved herself an immense amount of time and toil.

We will suppose the case of another mother, who has the same work to perform. She has taught her children prompt and implicit obedience. She gives three of them, perhaps, some blocks in one corner of the room, and tells them that they may play "*build houses,*" but that they must not make much noise and must not interrupt her, for she wishes to be busy. The other three she places in another corner of the room with their slates, and tells them that they may play "*make pictures.*" The children, accustomed to such orderly arrangements, employ themselves very quietly and happily for perhaps three-quarters of an hour. The mother goes on uninterrupted in her work. Occasionally she raises her eyes, and says an encouraging word to her children, now noticing the little architects in the corner and now glancing her eye at the drawings upon the slates, thus showing the children that she sympathizes with them and takes an interest in their enjoyments.

The children are pleased and happy. The mother is undisturbed.

She does not let them continue their amusements till they are weary of them; but, after they have played perhaps three-quarters of an hour, she says: —

"Come, children, you have played long enough. You may take up all your little blocks and put them away in the drawer."

"O mother," says Maria, "do let me play a little while longer, for I have got my house almost done."

"Well, you may finish it," says the judiciously kind mother, "but tell me as soon as it is done."

In a few minutes Maria says, "There, mamma, see what a large house I have built."

The mother looks at it and adds a pleasant word of encouragement, and then tells them to put all their blocks in the proper place. She tells the children with the slates to hang up their slates, and put away their pencils, so that the next day, when slates and blocks are wanted, no time may be lost in searching for them.

Now which mother has *the most time?* and which mother has the *happiest* time? And which mother will find the most comfort in the subsequent character and affection of her children?

Perhaps some one will say, This is a pleasing picture, but where are we to look for its reality? It is indeed to be regretted that such scenes are of so infrequent occurrence. But it is far from being true that they do not occur. There are many such families of happy parents and affectionate children. And these families are not confined to the wealthy and the learned. It requires not wealth, and it requires not extensive learning to train up such a family. The principle of government is simple and plain. It is to begin with enforcing obedience to every command. It is to establish the principle that a mother's word is never to be disregarded. Every judicious parent will, indeed, try to gratify her children in their reasonable wishes. She will study to make them happy. But she will never allow them to gratify themselves in contradiction to her wishes.

To illustrate this let us refer to the children playing with the blocks. The mother tells them to put up the blocks. Maria asks permission to play a few moments longer, till she can finish her house. The mother, desirous of making her children as happy as she can, grants this reasonable wish. Here is a judicious indulgence. But suppose again that the children had continued playing without regard to their mother's command. They intend perhaps to continue their amusement only till they complete the pile then in progress. Here is an act of direct disobedience. The children are consulting their own inclinations instead of the commands of their mother. A judicious parent will not allow such an act to pass unnoticed or unpunished. She may, perhaps, think, considering the circumstances of the case, that a serious reprimand is all that is required. But she will not fail to seize upon the occasion to instil into their minds a lesson of obedience.

Is it said that by noticing such *little things* a mother must be continually finding fault? But it is not a *little thing* for a child to disobey a mother's commands. This one act of disregarding authority prepares the way for another. It is the commencement of evil which must be resisted. The very first appearances of insubordination must be checked. There are, doubtless, cases of trifling faults occurring, which a wise parent will judge it expedient to overlook. Children will be thoughtless and inadvertent. They will occasionally err from strict propriety, without any real intention of doing wrong. Judgment is here requisite in deciding what things must be overlooked. But we may be assured, I think, that direct and open disobedience is not in any case to be classed among the number of trifling faults.

Now every mother has *power* to obtain prompt obedience, if she begins with her children when they are young. They are then entirely in her hands. All their enjoyments are at her disposal. God has thus given her all the power, that she may govern and guide them as she pleases. We have endeavored to show by the preceding illustrations that the fundamental principle of government is, *When you do give a command, invariably enforce its obedience.* And God has given every mother the *power.* He has placed in your hands a helpless babe, entirely dependent upon you, so that, if it disobeys you, all you have to do is to

cut off its sources of enjoyment or inflict bodily pain so steadily and so invariably that disobedience and suffering shall be indissolubly connected in the mind of the child. What more *power* can a parent ask for than God has already given? And, if we fail to use this power for the purposes for which it was bestowed, the sin is ours; and upon us and upon our children must rest the consequences. The exercise of discipline must often be painful; but, if you shrink from duty here, you expose yourself to all that sad train of woes which disobedient children leave behind them. Ah, it is dreadful for a mother to trifle with duty. Eternal destinies are committed to your trust. The influence you are now exerting will go on, unchecked by the grave or the judgment, and will extend onwards through those ages to which there is no end.—*John S. C. Abbott, in The Mother at Home.*

WHEN BIRD-SONG IS OVER.

"Now, dawn after dawn, there are painstaking lessons
To teach sky-science and wings delight.
Soon will they follow the swift feet of summer
Oh, Señor Swallow, we envy your flight."
—*Edwin Arnold.*

In this month of July begins—for lovers of bird-song—"the melancholy days, the saddest of the year"; for, before it passes, the song season is over. There are, it is true, two or three faithful ones who do not desert us entirely. As Thoreau says, "Some birds are poets, and sing all summer." Such are the happy song-sparrow, the cheery robin, and the dainty indigo-bird. But all the thrushes have fallen to silence. Orioles and bobolinks have subsided into demure heads of families, devoting themselves exclusively to training the rising generation, with thoughts already beginning to turn toward the long journey before them.

Bird-song has not been so thoroughly studied as it deserves, but enough is known to make it deeply interesting. The old notions that birds are limited to two or three expressions, and that all of a species exactly reproduce the notes of one another, have long been exploded among those who have given serious attention to our little brothers. Mr. Cheney, who studied the matter critically, and has given us a book of bird-songs carefully reduced to our musical scale, recognizes a great difference between individuals of the same species. "I find more and more that birds extemporize," he says, "and those of the same species do not sing alike." This must be the experience of every close student who has a musical ear.

Besides the fact that very early two birds of a species sing the same song, it is interesting, to note that many of them—most, indeed, that I have studied—have certain different, well-defined utterances, which may be classed as the Love Song, the Common Song (of great variety), the Whisper Song, the Flight Song.

The Love song is that which blesses us on the arrival of the birds in wooing mood. It is ecstatic, and probably the best a bird can do. To enjoy it, one needs to be not only up early in the morning, but in the fields promptly with the opening of the season. For when the bride is won, the home established, and the singer settled down to entertain his mate and await the time when the cherished shells give up their precious contents, and nests are "brimming over with the load of downy breasts and throbbing wings," the song becomes the calmly happy, characteristic, and greatly varied utterance which we may call the Common Song. It is then that the bird has leisure to vary, change, and elaborate his theme; and it is a particularly interesting time to study him.

Sometimes one shall be so happy as to overhear what I have called the bird's Whisper Song. One must be very near and very unobtrusive; for it can be heard only at the distance of a few yards, being delivered with nearly or quite closed beak, and by no means intended for the public ear. There is a dreamy, rapturous quality in this song, which differentiates it from all others. It seems to be addressed no more to the mate than to the world at large, but to be simply a soliloquy, an irrepressible bubbling over of his joy of life; and it gives emphatic denial to the opinion held by some persons that a bird lives in constant terror of his life. No one who has heard that song can resist the belief that it comes from a serene and joyous spirit. Birds are always alert, but it is unthinkable that they are always in fear.

The Flight Song is perhaps more rare and certainly different. Not all birds are known to indulge in that particular form of expression; but discoveries are constantly being made, and not infrequently another name is added to the list of birds known to have a Flight Song. This utterance, while unlike the others, usually introduces strains from the Common Song, or the family call, which readily identifies the singer. The oven-bird, for example, while pouring out his rhapsody, sailing about over one's head, often in the dusk of late afternoon, interpolates an occasional "teacher! teacher! teacher!" which proclaims him at once. The bewitching little Maryland yellow-throat, while delivering himself on wing, cannot refrain from a betraying "wichita! wichita! wichita!" which is equivalent to shouting his name.

While songs differ with individuals, with season, with emotions, and even with age, there is still always a certain family quality by which one may recognize the species. Rarely do two robins arrange their simple notes in the same way, yet one never fails to recognize the voice of a robin. It is the same with orioles, thrushes, and all others. There is sometimes a sort of family resemblance in the songs of two or three robins of a neighborhood, which suggests the thought that they may be brothers and have learned from one father. I once knew two Baltimore orioles who were exceedingly friendly with one another and nested near together, who sang exactly the same notes; but it was the only case I ever met with.

It is easier to learn to identify birds by their call notes and their notes of alarm and warning than by their songs. These are about the same in all of a species. All robins say "tut! tut!" and all give the cry called a "laugh" as well as other common sounds. All phœbes shout the beloved name from the barn roof, and all the least fly-catchers jerk out "chebec" by the hour. The olive-sides fly-catcher tribe, to a bird, drawl out their "see-here" from the top of a tree, and so with many others. But one and all of these birds are capable of more elaborate and varied songs. I have heard them in the case of those mentioned, and perhaps most of the birds we credit with having only the loud call notes with which we are familiar have times and seasons of indulging in quite different utterances.

Though song is dropping off during July, and by the middle of the month life in the tree-tops goes on nearly in silence, bird affairs have not lost their interest. The world is still full of little family groups under training, learning "sky-science and wings delight," and, what is of equal importance to them, becoming familiar with the products of earth and their respective values from a gastronomic point of view. Also at this time many birds are still sitting, some on a second brood, some whose first attempts came to grief, and some who are always late in setting up their homes. Among the latter, two are especially noteworthy, that model of elegant manners, the cedar-bird, or cedar waxwing, in daintiest of silky plumage of Quaker hue, and the charming goldfinch, "all black and gold, a flame of fire, swinging on his purple thistle."

I know of no bird who so fully expressed the joy of life as this tiny fellow-creature; and his flight, as he goes bounding through the air, uttering a joyous note with every wing-beat, is pure ecstasy. Often, when he has apparently no desire to go anywhere, he will fling himself upon the air with vehemence, make a wide circle, and return to his perch, or bound straight up ten feet or more, and then drop back, pouring out his delicious notes, evidently because he is so brimful of bliss he cannot contain himself. Then his songs, especially his morning songs, which come after other birds have finished theirs, have a quality of rapture which cannot be expressed. The goldfinch has a wonderful variety of songs and calls, and he and his mate an apparently endless number of conversational notes, all in the tender, sweet voices of the family. He is one of the few birds who sing in chorus. No bird pair that I know is more attractive in its family life, the little matron so timid and clinging, with such an appealing call, the small spouse so tender and attentive, so different from his usual jolly manners, and fully impressed with his responsibility as head of the family. They always remind me of a boy and girl play-marriage, a sort of a David and Dora Copperfield affair. It is not because they are small. Some birds, less in size, are fussy and important, others bluff and seemingly rather indifferent, while in one or two cases,

notably the humming-bird, the nest-maker appears to be independent of her mate, and able to manage her domestic concerns without aid.

Truly, the more intimately we know these instructive tribes of the air, the more heartily shall we agree with the poet, who exclaims,

"How like birds are men!"

— *Olive Thorne Miller.*

NEWTON'S CHILDHOOD.

Sir Isaac Newton is the greatest of modern philosophers and mechanics. When he was born, Dec. 25, 1642, three months after his father's death, he was so small and feeble that no one supposed he would live a day; but the weak infant grew to be a healthy, robust man, who lived until he was eighty-four years old. He began to invent or contrive machines, and to show his taste for mechanics in early childhood. He inherited some property from his father and his mother, who had married a second time, sent him to the best schools, and to the University of Cambridge. At school he soon showed his natural taste. He amused himself with little saws, hatchets, hammers, and different tools, and, when his companions were at play, spent his time in making machines and toys. He made a wooden clock when he was twelve years old, and the model of a windmill; and in his mill he put a mouse which he called his miller, and which turned the wheels by running around its cage. He made a water-clock four feet high, and a cart with four wheels, not unlike a velocipede, in which he could drive himself by turning a windlass.

His love of mechanics often interrupted his studies at school, and he was sometimes making clocks and carriages when he ought to have been construing Latin and Greek. But his mind was so active that he easily caught up again with his fellow-scholars, and was always fond of every kind of knowledge. He taught the school-boys how to make paper kites, he made paper lanterns by which to go to school in the dark winter mornings, and sometimes, at night, he would alarm the whole country round by raising his kites in the air with a paper lantern attached to the tail. They would shine like meteors in the distance; and the country people, at that time very ignorant, would fancy them omens of evil and celestial lights.

He was never idle for a moment. He learned to draw and sketch; he made little tables and sideboards for the children to play with; he watched the motions of the sun by means of pegs he had fixed in the wall of the house where he lived, and marked every hour.

At last, when he was about sixteen, his mother placed him in charge of a farm; and every Saturday he went with a servant to Grantham market to sell his corn and vegetables. But the affairs of the farm did not prosper. The young philosopher hid himself away in a room in a garret which he hired, studying mechanics and inventing a water-wheel on a new model, while the sheep wandered away in the field and the cattle devoured his corn.

Next he went to Cambridge University, and became a famous scholar. At the age of twenty-four he began his study of the spectrum, as philosophers call that brilliant picture of the colors of the rainbow which is shown by the sun's rays shining through a three-sided piece of glass, called a prism. It is one of the most beautiful objects in science or nature; and Newton's study of its splendid colors led to his greatest discoveries of optics or the science of the sight. In our own time the use of the prism and its spectrum has shown us of what the sun and moon are composed.

One day, as Newton sat musing in his garden at his retired country home, an apple fell from a tree to the ground. A great idea at once arose in his mind; and he conceived the plan of the universe and of the law of gravitation, as it is called. He was the first to discover that famous law. He showed that the heavier body always attracts the lighter; that, as the apple falls to the earth, so the earth is drawn toward the sun; that all the planets feel the law of gravitation, and that all the universe seems to obey one will. Newton soon became the most famous of living philosophers. But at the same time he was the most modest of men. He never knew that he had done anything more than others, nor felt that he was any more studious or

busy. Yet he never ceased to show, even in late old age, the same love for mechanical pursuits and the study of nature he had shown when a boy. His most famous work, the "Principia," proving the law of gravitation and the motion of the planets, appeared in 1687. He made beautiful prisms of glass and other substances, and fine reflecting telescopes, the best that were yet known. He wrote valuable histories and works. He was always a devout Christian and scholar. He died in 1727, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Thus the puny babe, that was scarcely thought worth the care of his nurses, became an active and healthy boy and man, with the clearest mind of his time. He was stout, ruddy, healthy, and never, it is said, lost a tooth. But he preserved his health by avoiding all that was hurtful. He was a philosopher at twelve years old, and the world owes much of its progress to Newton's well-spent childhood.—*Harper's Young People.*

AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[*Contributions to this column may be sent to Miss K. C. Porter, 22 Brimmer Street, Boston, Mass.*]

I.

Casket of Jewels.

1. The missionaries start for India Monday next in the P. and O. steamer.
2. Who told Edgar netting was Geraldine's favorite work?
3. For luxury go to palaces.
4. I hope Arlington will be my home.
5. So high a gateway is imposing.
6. Since he became thy student, his work has been tireless.

II.

Word Square.

My first is the trembling poplar-tree.
My second, the margin of the sea.
My third are straight sticks, slim and tall.
My fourth they are when vertical.
My fifth are homes for little birds.
I've told enough, now guess the words!

III.

A Queer Dream.

(There is a hidden word in each line. The first stanza contains buried trees, the second fruit, the third vegetables, the fourth flowers.)

1. Beneath the trees I sleep in ease
   And dream, a pleasant dream;
   I see a knight, with helmet bright,
   Beside a dashing stream.
2. And through the glade appears a maid,
   A figure small and slight;
   "Art thou a fay or angel, say?"
   Exclaimed the pluméd knight.
3. "I am no fay, but peasant gay,"
   She scornfully replied;
   "Oh, turn, I pray," the knight did say,
   "And be a noble's bride."
4. She at his word awhile demurred:
   "Now, master, you provoke me,"—
   Uprose, and frowned; but here a sound,
   A robin's call, awoke me.

IV.

Charade.

Found on the pebbly beach,
Part of the luscious peach,
My first is.
Keeping all things apart,
Separating heart from heart,
My second is.
Nickname of rebel chief,
To this world, alas! now deaf,
My whole is.

Answers to Puzzles in June Number.

I.

"To receive honestly is the best thanks for a good thing."

II.

Hidden Cities.

1. London.
2. Paris.
3. Constantinople.
4. Berlin.
5. Athens.
6. Rome.
7. Venice.
8. Naples.

III.

To-m-a-t-o.

IV.

1. Forget-me-not.
2. Four-o'clock.
3. Hollyhock.
4. Bachelor's button.
5. Rose.
6. Aster (asked her).

V.

Let it rain.

VI.

The boy fills the three-quart can and pours it into the five, then fills it again and pours it into the five-quart can until it is full, which leaves him one quart.

PARIS CATS.

A good many articles and books, says the Paris *Figaro*, have been written about the dogs of Constantinople, which are distributed over the town in regular quarters, live on their own resources, and manage all their little affairs themselves. Why should we not say a few words about the cats of Paris? The feline colonies of Paris are quite as well worth studying as the Turkish dogs.

There are whole colonies of cats in the Paris markets, and every day the colonies are swollen by the arrival of new recruits. From time to time they get so numerous they are dangerous.

In many Parisian houses, especially those boasting large gardens, there are feline colonies. A round dozen of cats, at least, have been brought stealthily to my house in the dead of the night in half-open baskets. How do they live? Poor creatures! Now and then a charitable soul has compassion on them. But this is the exception, and it is not prudent to be pitiful. Once you feed them, the grateful animals will come back to be fed again, and you cannot get rid of them. I have adopted as many as five, one after another, and kept them alive until I had succeeded in getting homes for them.

In the Rue Condorcet the house of Prof. Duprez was turned into an asylum for a whole army of abandoned cats. I might mention the cat colonies in the cellars of the *Figaro* office, where they defend the paper and printing implements from the assault of rats and mice which infest the place. But I will go at once to the most curious of the cat colonies in Paris,—the one at the prefecture de police.

No matter at what hour of the day or night you may chance to be passing by the big buildings which stretch from the Court of Assizes to the tribunal correctionnel, you will see an army of cats, of all sizes, breeds, and colors, seated, lying down, or prowling about the place.

To whom do they belong? To nobody. They are all lost cats. Who feeds them? *La mère aux chats*,—the mother of the cats.

Every day, wet weather or fine, at nine in the morning and at nine at night, a good old lady arrives, bending beneath the weight of a heavy basket. She settles down in the court-yard known as the *Cour du Dépôt*, takes a number of saucers out of her basket and puts a piece of meat on each. The cats know their feeding hours, and cluster around. Then the distribution begins. All is done fairly. There is no squabbling. Each little boarder waits in turn, knowing it will not be forgotten. As she serves them, the good old "mother of the cats" has a kind word and caress for each; and each cat answers with a grateful purr.

When all have been fed, the *mère aux chats* bids her children good-by, gathers up her saucers and departs. I have taken some pains to find out the good woman's name. She is a Mme. W——, and lives with her son, an usher at Cour de Cassation. She is sixty-three years old, and has fed the cats of the prefecture for the past five years. At first her son tried to prevent her. But she would not be dissuaded, appealed to the administration, and had the permission she needed formally granted her. She has only one trouble,—the thought that she is growing old. "If I were to fall ill," she exclaims, "who would feed the poor things?"

There are many other cat colonies in Paris, but it would take too long to describe them.

TOWSER, THE MAT-SHAKER.

Towser is a little black dog. He belongs to the janitor who has charge of a large school-house. While the janitor sweeps, he will tell Towser to go and shake the mats. There are several of them; and away goes the dog, at his master's command, carrying them into the street. Seizing a mat by the corner with his mouth, he beats it against the pavement until he is in such a cloud of dust that you can hardly see Towser at all.

If any one tries to touch his work, he will bark and growl. When he has finished his task, Towser will carry the mats in and put them into their places, not exactly as they should be, perhaps, but each mat on the spot where it belongs. He then creeps up to his master, who pats him on the head, and gives him a piece of meat. This story is all true.—*Nursery.*

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

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1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged — not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort — by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

4. An important part of our mission is to mothers of young families, who feel the importance of their sacred charge and are anxious to learn all that can be known to make of their children good, upright, useful men and women,— good citizens of the country,—for which we must all work together if we would make it fulfil its mission among the nations of the world and to the races of mankind. We give books on subjects connected with the training of children, and our columns are open (in our "Mothers' Council") to all who have questions to ask or interesting suggestions to make on topics important to mothers.

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Please notice changes in the addresses of our officers, during the summer.

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